WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method in a data processing system having a program, the method comprising the steps of:

asynchronously receiving a plurality of data instances, each data instance having one of a plurality of formats; and

providing a datatype of a first format for each data instance, each datatype having a metadata in the first format that describes the respective data instance and a reference in the first format to the respective data instance, the data instances being maintained separately from the datatypes.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

publishing one of the plurality of datatypes, wherein the respective datatype instance is not published with the datatype.

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- 3. The method of claim 2, wherein a subscriber receiving the published datatype responsive to subscribing to the datatype of the first format is not required to recognize the format of the data instance.
 - 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the reference to the data is a pointer.
- 5. A computer-readable medium containing instructions that cause a program in a data processing medium to perform a method comprising the steps of:

asynchronously receiving a plurality of data instances, each data instance having one of a plurality of formats; and

providing a datatype of a first format for each data instance, each datatype having a metadata in the first format that describes the respective data instance and a reference in the first format to the respective data instance, the data instances being maintained separately from the datatypes.

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6. The computer-readable medium of claim 5, further comprising the step of: publishing one of the plurality of datatypes, wherein the respective datatype instance is not published with the datatype.

- 7. The computer-readable medium of claim 6, wherein a subscriber receiving the published datatype responsive to subscribing to the datatype of the first format is not required to recognize the format of the data instance.
- 5 8. The computer-readable medium of claim 5, wherein the reference to the data is a pointer.
 - 9. A data processing system comprising:
 - a memory having a program that asynchronously receives a plurality of data instances, each data instance having one of a plurality of formats, and provides a datatype of a first format for each data instance, each datatype having a metadata in the first format that describes the respective data instance and a reference in the first format to the respective data instance, the data instances being maintained separately from the datatypes; and

a processing unit that runs the program.

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10. A data processing system comprising:

means for asynchronously receiving a plurality of data instances, each data instance having one of a plurality of formats; and

means for providing datatype of a first format for each data instance, each datatype having a metadata in the first format that describes the respective data instance and a reference in the first format to the respective data instance, the data instances being maintained separately from the datatypes.